2/21/72

Dear Harold,

I have alittle time now to write on some matters of concern and interest.

The first is Jerry. I have spoken to him about revising the F-U part of his article, and have pretty much suggested things as I think you have or would suggest. I told him that he says nothing of how Kaplan's review lies and distorts about the book, and he must include that. Also suggested other smaller changes, which I think are in your favor.

However, there is a limit as to what Jerry can do or should. True, he bent over needlessly to protect the whores. With regards to the footnote, I think it is not up to Jerry, with the focus of his piece, to argue about the rightness (factual) of either you or Wolfe. The point is that the Times printed his letter without affording you the opportunity to respond or refute, and that is plainly unethical. Furthermore, while I am pretty much convinced that you are right in the matter about reviewing WW, I have some doubts which cause reservations. For one, while I do not doubt the authenticity of your notes, I am not completely satisfied as to their accuracy. I ask myself if Wolfe, in an effort to be nice to you without flatly refusing to review, said complementary things about the book which you took the wrong way, or merely extended past what he meant to say. Also, if Wolfe did not read the whole book, how could he have promised to review it? My recollection of the details is not too good now, and that file is at home. However, Jerry simply cannot put himself in the position of having to vouch for the accuracy (NOT authenticity) of your contemp. notes, and if he did he would be taking sides where I think it not proper to. He can treat the matter in a way which is perfectly favorable to you and disastrous to the Times (as it properly should be) without trying to defend your factual arguments.

Re the Budget: I have been doing a lot of thinking on this, plus seeking the opinions of others. I do realize that the budget is a projection for the future, in several ways. It is a projection of what Nixon wnts to do, and it is also a projection in that funds now for research and "development" are not the same as funds for deployment, which will be far more massive and consequently could signal future defense rises. I haven't followed the economic scene very closely, but I've considered what you've suggested. The enormous deficit means that the gov't has been spending much more than it's been taking in; the trade deficit means we've been importing more than exporting. This is a bad economic situation, to say the least. It would appear, then, that Nixon has chosen the classic way out: to "prime the pump" through increased defense spending. If I am not mistaken, this is exactly what LBJ did. In conjunction with this, the disclosure of the secret negotiations fits in as a signal that Nixon has no intention of ending our military presence in Vietnam, or SE Asia. The terms we offer are unacceptable, and everything we have done fits into the standard tactics for thwarting negotiations--like bombing the North, cancelling negotiating sessions for no reason. Nixon must fear

a real economic disaster if we withdrew completely, and he must be under pressure in this way from military and business. (Incidently, I just clipped from NYT an article about an American contractor who is now drilling for oil off coast of Burma.) The Pentagon announced right after Nixon revelation of "Peace" moves that our bases would remain in Thailand XXXXX even after we were out of VN.

On the nature of the stuff on which the defense funds are to be spend, like the nuclear subs, I am not too clear. I too don't think Nixon intends to use them. It will be on hand and offer uses other than 1)nuclear attack and 2)justifications to spend more money. It can be used as a means to XXXXXX get things from other countries through nuclear blackmail, which means we have to do what we've been doing all along--keeping a nuclear superiority, what I think is a "first strike capability." I am somewhat in the dark with all this nuclear nonsense, and most of the theories and explanations escape me because of the insanity and horror of the whole thing.

Well, how am I doing coach?

Must run. Take care and best to Lil.

Still,

Howard